Aids in India

213. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 2.5 million Indians already carry the HIV (Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus) as per the news-item entitled "HIV has hit 2.5 million Indians" which appeared in the Times of India, dated 6th April, 1992 ;

(b) if so, what are the latest facts regarding the spread of AIDS in the country ;

(c) what fresh steps Government propose to take to prevent/stop the spread of AIDS in this country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) and (b), Government has seen the news item titled "HIV has hit 2.5 million Indians" which appeared in the Times of India dated 6th April, 1992.

Surveillance for detecting HIV infection among groups practising at risk behaviour was initiated in October, 1985. As on 1st April, 1992, 7272 persons practising at risk behaviour were found to be positive out of a total number of 13,48,965 persons screened. This indicates a zero positivity rate of 5.39 per 1000 amongst groups practising at risk behaviour.

There are no reliable estimates regarding the prevalence of HIV infection in the general population.

(c) A comprehensive project for prevention and control of AIDS was formulated and posed to the World Bank. Negotiations have been concluded for financing the project. World Bank has agreed to provide assistance of Rs. 22.95 crores for implementation of AIDS Control Project. The project will involve total outlay of Rs. 270 crores and will be implemented for a period of 5 years beginning 1992. WHO will provide an assistance of Rs. 4.05 crores. The balance project outlay of Rs. 36.45 crores will be funded by the Government of India.

The National AIDS Control Project would be implemented as centrally sponsored scheme during the eighth five year plan. The project activities will be undertaken in the following areas :—

—Condom promotion

—Blood Safety

—Control of sexually transmitted disease.

—Information, education and communication

—Surveillance

—Case management

—Programme Management and training to Medical and Para-medical staff.

Government Rules in respect of Leprosy Patients

214. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Times of India of 1st April, 1992 under the caption "Government rules against leprosy patients" ;

(b) what is Government's reaction to the demand to update various laws affecting leprosy patients ; and

(c) what steps are being taken to change existing attitudes to laprosy patients ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Union Government has already repealed the Lapers Act, 1895. All the States/UTs except Punjab and Bihar have also repealed this Act. Those two States have been requested to repeal the Act at an early date. Other discriminatory acts affecting leprosy patients were discussed by a Special Group in the Annual Conference of Voluntary Organisatations held under